Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 USUN N 01096 050333Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9781
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

S E C R E T USUN 1096

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PO, PORG, PINT
SUBJECT: PERSONAL CONCERNS OF PORTUGUESE PERMREP

1. PORTUGUESE PERM REP INVITED AMBASSADOR BENNETT TO PRIVATE
LUNCHEON APRIL 4 AND LOST NO TIME IN RAISING QUESTION OF
HIS PERSONAL FUTURE. HE REFERRED TO RECENT POLITICAL
DETERIORATION IN PORTUGAL AND EXPRESSED VIEW THAT COMMUNISTS
HAD LAID CLEVER AND EXPLOITABLE TRAP TO CATCH SPINOLA AND
THOSE ARMED FORCES ELEMENTS INVOLVED IN MID-MARCH EVENTS
IN PORTUGAL. VEIGA-SIMAO BELIEVES IT IS ONLY QUESTION OF
TIME UNTIL COMMUNISTS MOVE "TO DESTROY" HIM AND SAYS HE CAME
TO CONCLUSION HE SHOULD MOVE FIRST. HE SHOWED BENNETT COPIES
OF LETTER HE HAD WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT COSTA-GOMES, TO SOARES AND
TO NEW FONMIN. LETTERS ARE DIGNIFIED PRESENTATION OF HIS
PERSONAL CREED, BELIEF IN DEMOCRACY, AND RECOLLECTION OF
HIS OWN EFFORTS IN THAT DIRECTION AS PROFESSOR, FIRST RECTOR
OF UNIVERSITY OF MOZAMBIQUE (AGAINST OPPOSITION OF THEN-
LISBON ESTABLISHMENT) AND MINISTER OF EDUCATION.
LETTER CONTINUE WITH HIS ACCEPTANCE OF FACT THAT
POLITICAL CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED IN LISBON AND THAT
GOVERNMENT MIGHT WELL WISH TO CHANGE ITS REPRESENTATION
IN NEW YORK. HE CONCLUDES WITH OFFER OF RESIGNATION
IN EVENT GOP WISHES NEW MAN IN NEW YORK. HE ALSO
SHOWED BENNETT REPLY FROM COSTA-GOMES, COUCHED IN FRIENDLY
TERMS. REGRETTING VEIGA-SIMAO'S DECISION AND ACCEPTING
HIS RESIGNATION AT TIME A REPLACEMENT IS NAMED. VEIGA-

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PAGE 02 USUN N 01096 050333Z

SIMAO ESTIMATES REPLACEMENT WILL PROBABLY BE NAMED IN A

MONTH OR SO. HE CONSIDERS HE HAS MADE HIS DEPARTURE POSSIBLE ON
FRIENDLY TERMS AND WITHOUT LEAVING BAD FEELINGS.

2. VEIGO-SIMAO WOULD LIKE TO HAVE OWN PLAN
                              S ARRANGED
BEFORE REPLACEMENT NAMED. HE SAID HE IS NOT AFRAID TO
GO HOME IF HE IS CALLED ON CONSULTATION (ONE OF HIS
FOUR CHILDREN IS STUDYING LAW AT UNIVERSITY OF LISBON
ALTHOUGH V-S SAYS THERE IS NO STUDYING BEING DONE
UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS), BUT WOULD LIKE TO HAVE
SOMETHING IN HIS POCKET WHEN HE GOES. HE ASKED U.S. HELP
IN TRYING TO LOCATE A POSITION IN UN SECRETARIAT OR IN AN
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OR FOUNDATION. HE SAYS HE DOES NOT
LACK FOR OFFERS IN BRAZIL, BUT DOES NOT WISH TO GO THERE
AT THIS TIME; IT WAS CLEAR THAT, PERHAPS WITH AN EYE TOWARDS
AN EVENTUAL RETURN TO PORTUGAL, HE DOES NOT WANT TO HAVE
IT LOOK AS THOUGH HE IS JOINING CAETANO/SPINOLA GROUP OF
EXILES IN BRAZIL.

3. VEIGA-SIMAO REMAINS UNCERTAIN AS TO
COSTA-GOMES' POLITICAL ORIENTATION AND NOTES LATTER HAS
CEASED SPEAKING OF "PLURALIST DEMOCRACY" IN HIS PUBLIC
UTTERANCE. HOWEVER, HE RECOGNIZES PRESIDENT IS UNDER GREAT
INTERNAL PRESSURES, SAYS HE HAS BEEN WELL TREATED PERSONALLY
BY COSTA-GOMES AND CONTINUES TO HOPE FOR THE BEST AS REGARDS
PRESIDENT'S ORIENTATION AND ABILITY TO MANEUVER POSITIVELY
IN CURRENT-DAY PORTUGUESE SCENE.

4. BENNETT EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH VEIGA-SIMAO AND SAID
WE WOULD TRY TO BE HELPFUL TO HIM. HE COULD MAKE NO DEFINITE
PROMISES, HOWEVER, AND POINTED OUT DECISIONS RE UNIVERSITIES OR
OTHER POSITIONS DID NOT USUALLY COME VERY QUICKLY. HE
TOLD VEIGA-SIMAO LATTER'S INTEREST WOULD BE REPORTED TO DEPART-
MENT PROMPTLY.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE FOUND VEIGA-SIMAO TO BE A DECENT,
HONEST INDIVIDUAL, FULLY COMMITTED TO WEST IN HIS POLITICAL
SYMPATHIES. HE HAS PLAYED STRAIGHT WITH US HERE. IN USUN'S
OPINION HE IS DESERVING OF OUR HELP IN A TIME WHICH FOR HIM
HOLDS GREAT PERSONAL PROBLEMS AND CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE.
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PAGE 03 USUN N 01096 050333Z

HE MERITS OUR SUPPORT.
SCALI

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